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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 005166

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/07/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ENRG](#) [KDEM](#) [IZ](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: INDIA SEEKING SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS IN IRAQ

REF: A. STATE 124857

[B](#). NEW DELHI 4798

[C](#). NEW DELHI 4619

Classified By: PolCouns Geoffrey Pyatt for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: In the aftermath of the US-EU Conference in Brussels, MEA Joint Secretary (Gulf Division) Sanjay Singh reiterated GOI willingness to support Iraq's reconstruction and sought specific small-scale projects, especially in the electricity sector, which the GOI might consider funding and executing. In a conversation with PolCouns and PolMilOff on July 6, Singh also said the GOI would be willing to make experts available via DVC to assist on any specific constitutional issues for which Iraqis would like their input. Mission requests Washington's input on both of these Indian requests. End Summary.

GOI Assessment of Brussels Conference

[1](#)2. (C) Describing the Brussels conference as "access non-friendly," Singh seemed somewhat disappointed that Indian FM Natwar Singh had only a few minutes to interact with PM Jaafari and FM Zebari. Nevertheless, Singh stated that the forum clearly demonstrated international support to implement UNSCR 1546. He remarked on some arguments among Arab participants about the structure of the future Iraqi state, i.e., federal or republic, and debate between the US and European representatives about reference to NATO in the joint statement. He noted also that other countries, e.g., Brazil and Japan, share some of the same reservations as India regarding debt forgiveness, especially regarding privately-held debt (Ref C). He was encouraged by the universal recognition of the terrorist threat in Iraq.

Seeking Small-Scale Electricity Projects

[1](#)3. (C) Recalling that FM Singh mentioned opportunities for assisting Iraq in the electricity sector in his statement at the Brussels conference (Ref B), PolCouns asked if the GOI had developed any ideas for funding such projects. Singh remarked that Ambassador Jones' advocacy for Indian assistance in the electricity sector had helped shape New Delhi's thinking about how best to engage in Iraq. The Joint Secretary went on to outline what he saw as the process for

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engaging Iraq on any future projects: New Delhi was awaiting a position paper from Baghdad, which would then be discussed at an interministerial meeting, followed by a meeting of the reconstituted Indo-Iraq Joint Commission. Considering the push to adopt a new constitution and hold national elections according to the established timeline, he did not see this coming to fruition before December 15. He did, however, express interest in funding location-specific electricity projects for \$3-5 million, as recommended by Ambassador Jones, and asked if it would be possible to get a list of such projects.

Democratization Assistance via DVC

[1](#)4. (C) PolCouns also delivered the points in Ref A, underscoring that India could provide insight on several political and administrative questions via video-conferencing. Singh stated that he felt the Iraqis already knew what they wanted in their constitution, much of which is already included in the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL). The GOI, however, would be willing to make experts available via DVC to assist on any specific issues for which Iraqis would like their input, e.g., division of state expenditures, financial controls, election assistance, human rights, etc. He was confident that qualified Indian experts in these areas would be available for a video-conference if we or the Iraqis made a specific proposal. The GOI already participates in UN working groups on Iraq's constitutional issues, according to Singh. Despite the travel ban on Indian citizens to Iraq, Singh added that one Indian Supreme Court lawyer was currently in Baghdad to advise on the constitution under the aegis of a foreign, possibly American, NGO.

Amman Conference

15. (SBU) Finally, Singh said the GOI looked forward to more direct interaction with the Iraqis on future projects at the Amman conference, July 18-19. He did not yet know the composition of the GOI delegation to that conference, but thought it likely that he would attend.

16. (U) Minimize considered.
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